

## **Cruise Ship Study Task Force Accomplishments – Final Report**

### **Passenger and Resident Experience**

1. **Cruise Season** – Reviewed, made recommendation, and implemented by Town Council for the 2010 cruise season. Dates were set to define the season for spring, summer, and fall cruise seasons. This item was reviewed by the Harbor Committee.
2. **Capacity Determination** – Reviewed, made recommendation, and implemented by the Town Council for the 2010 cruise season. Methodology to determine cruise vessel capacity was defined by using the lower berth method.
3. **Passenger Throughput** - Reviewed, made recommendation, and implemented by the Town Council for the 2010 cruise season. Max daily capacity was set for the spring, summer, and fall seasons to preserve a positive passenger experience. This recommendation was also reviewed by the Harbor Committee.
4. **Resident/Community Surveys** – Reviewed, made recommendation, and implemented by the Town Council to task the Cruise Ship Study Task Force with working with the Chamber of Commerce to develop a survey and methodology to gather public opinion on cruise operations in Bar Harbor at the end of the 2009 cruise season. The Task Force formed a subcommittee to develop survey questions. The subcommittee continues to work on final questions and methodology. This will be one of the first items of business for the new Cruise Committee.

### **Cruise Fees**

1. **Fees** - Reviewed, made recommendation, and implemented by Town Council a new structure for cruise fees based on a bundled per passenger charge. The fees were also reviewed by the Harbor Committee as required by Town Charter. This fee is inclusive of anchorage, police detail, bus, and other currently collected fees with the addition of a port development component. The new fee structure was implemented in FY10 beginning July 1, 2009.
2. **Budget** - Reviewed, made recommendation, and Town Council directed staff to develop a mechanism to ensure that revenue funds from these operations are dedicated to items contained in the Cruise Operations Annual budget that was developed and submitted by the CSSTF. This was implemented in the FY10 annual budget and approved at the June 2, 2009 Annual Town Meeting. The FY11 Budget was presented to Council on December 15, 2009. This budget review will take place annually by the new standing Cruise Ship Committee.

### **Tender Landing**

1. **Harborside Tendering Facility** – This item was on every CSSTF agenda to ensure the developer had a venue to update and/or receive input from the group. Only preliminary discussions have taken place.

2. **T105 Classification** - Reviewed, made recommendation, and Town Council directed staff to evaluate the feasibility of seeking security classification to conduct tendering operations from Town owned facilities if required in the future. The Town now has an approved security plan.
3. **Cat Ferry Terminal** - Reviewed the use of the Cat ferry terminal facility for cruise operations. The Town Manager and Town Council representatives have met with the facility operator to express interest in the concept. Further discussions continue on an infrequent basis.

## **Tender Operations**

1. **Tender Emissions** – Reviewed and made no suggestions as cruise lines are moving to lower sulfur fuels as suggested in the study.
2. **Tender Wake Reduction** – Reviewed and made no suggestions. The methods suggested in the study for wake reduction are contained in the Harbor Master's current Cruise Ship Standard Operating Procedures distributed to the cruise lines and agents. This is primarily an awareness and enforcement issue.
3. **Tender driver education** – Reviewed and made no suggestions. These items are again contained in the Harbor Master's current Cruise Ship Standard Operating Procedures which is distributed to agents for further dissemination to cruise lines at the beginning of each cruise season. Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) is also addressing this through their development of tender operator training for their member lines.

## **Motor Coach Operations**

1. **One way motor coach movement** – reviewed and made no recommendation since this is the current practice. The practice works well and the CSSTF saw no better alternatives.
2. **Parking and queuing areas** – Reviewed, made recommendation, and Town Council implemented the following items:
  - a. Extended hours of operations of the loading area on Main Street at the intersection of Main and West Streets.
  - b. Added one additional loading area at the bottom of Agamont Park.
3. **Empty transportation vehicle circulation** – reviewed and made no recommendation since this is the current practice. Empty coaches currently queue at the ball park when possible and the CSSTF saw no better alternatives.
4. **Idling** – Reviewed and made no recommendation. Bar Harbor has in place an idling ordinance to address this issue. This is primarily an awareness and enforcement issue.
  - a. Hosted a presentation by Scott Riccio, President/Owner of Northeast Charter & Tour Co, Inc., on the many issues surrounding Tour Bus Idling and the issues surrounding the use of Tour Busses manufactured after the 2007 Federal EPA requirements.
    - i. Possible future ordinance changes may be required to allow for Stationary Regeneration of diesel engine emissions system if required.

- ii. At this point in time however, it is too early in the implementation of this technology to determine if any changes are required.
- iii. This issue should be reviewed on a yearly basis to determine if changes are required.

**5. Downtown drop-off point** – reviewed and made the following recommendations:

- a. To create a passenger drop-off at the top of Agamont Park between Main Street and the parking area on the south side of Newport Drive. This recommendation was implemented by the Town Council during the 2008 cruise season.
- b. To create a downtown drop off with a flexible location to accommodate changes in traffic patterns, tour routes, and tour timing. The operation of this drop off would be coordinated by the Police Department with input from the Chamber of Commerce and the cruise industry. This concept was tested successfully three days during the 2008 cruise season on Mt. Desert Street near the intersection of Main Street. This recommendation was implemented for the 2009 cruise season.

## **Passenger movement**

- 1. **Island Explorer Town Circulation Route** – Reviewed and recommended to approach the island explorer to see if there was interest by the Island Explorer in providing this service. The Town Council directed staff and Council representation to approach the Island Explorer. Explorer representative expressed little interest in providing this service due to operational issues and high costs.
- 2. **Ground Transportation Area efficient use management** – Review and made no further recommendation. The Cruise Ship study made a recommendation to group shore excursion coach tour loads on board ship to move passengers more efficiently. This is current practice on board the ship so that tour operators can identify and guide passengers quickly and efficiently. The current practice works well.
- 3. **Directional Signage** - Reviewed, made recommendation, and Town Council directed staff to include funds in the FY2010 budget for signage at the intersection of Mt. Desert and Main Streets to indicate direction to the Town Pier, as well as, signage to facilitate passenger loading/boarding and other general passenger informational signage. This signage will use international symbols where possible.

## **Traffic Movement**

- 1. **One Way Traffic Movement** – Reviewed, made recommendation, and Town Council implemented this concept on cruise ship days only, West Street be one-way easterly between the Town Pier and the intersection with Maine Street. This will improve congestion and passenger safety by allowing left turns Main and onto West Street from Main Street.

## **Ground Transportation Area**

- 1. Reviewed, made recommendations, and Council implemented the following:

- a. Eliminated the current practice of dedicating four parking spaces to Taxi Tour operations in front of Harbor Place. On Cruise Ship days only, the parking spaces in Harborview Park will be deemed a ground transportation area for pickup and drop only. This will be on a first come, first serve basis with maximum standing of ten minutes.
  - b. On Cruise Ship days only, dedicate two western parking spaces in front of Harbor Place (adjacent to the ramp from the Harbor Place pier) which will provide space for tourism information, pedestrian overflow, and other public services. There will be no parking in these spaces.
  - c. Phase two of this concept would be for further staff study into modifying the park to change queuing to be parallel to the street and thus widen and open Harbor View Park pedestrian spaces.
- 2. Reviewed and recommended the placement of an information Kiosk in Harbor View Park to facilitate a move of informational services from the current location in front of Harbor Place. This was an effort to relieve congestion at the present location. Town staff received required permission from the Land & Water Conservation Fund at the Maine Department of Conservation for the placement of this Kiosk. This kiosk must also receive approval from the Parks and Recreation Committee and the Design Review Board. The Kiosk location has met some resistance at the Parks and Recreation Committee level although they have not formally taken action to date.

### **Streetscape, Sidewalk, and Accessibility**

- 1. Reviewed, made recommendation, and Town Council took action that funds allocated to sidewalk and accessibility improvements in the Cruise Operations annual budget be directed to projects currently identified in the Town's sidewalk improvement program for the downtown corridor such as Lower Main Street to improve accessibility.
- 2. Reviewed, made recommendation and Town Council took action to make possible the FY2010 building of the Agamont Park Comfort Station. A bond issue approved at the June 2, 2009 annual Town Meeting will facilitate starting of construction of this facility in FY2010.
- 3. Reviewed, made recommendation and Town Council took action to apply to the Cruise Industry Charitable Trust for grant funding for the placement of recycling receptacles in the downtown area. This application was denied in 2009.

### **Environmental Monitoring Program**

- 1. Reviewed and made a recommendation for funding through the Cruise Operation Operating Budget. This budget was conceptually approved by the Town Council.
- 2. Staff and Cruise Ship Study Task Force Chair made contact with MDI Bio Lab Scientist George Kidder to determine if this institution had further suggestions on moving a monitoring program forward. Dr. Kidder has made no further suggestions to date.

3. During the FY 10 Council budget process, these funds were reallocated to more pressing needs within Cruise Operation budget due to the fact that no proposals had been received, or recommended, for water quality testing.
4. The New Cruise Committee should continue to monitor this and evaluate any proposals that come to the attention of the Town or the Committee.

### **Cruise Tourism Partnerships**

1. **Representation at Industry Events** - Review and made recommendations on an ongoing basis to aid in fostering relationships with the industry. This has resulted in the attendance by Town representatives at three separate Cruise Industry Events/Conferences.
2. **Funding** - Recommended funding these activities through the Cruise Operations Operating Budget. This budget was conceptually approved by the Town Council and incorporated in the FY10 budget and approved at the June 2, 2009 annual Town Meeting. The FY11 was presented to the Town Council on December 15, 2009.

### **Future of Cruise Ship Study Task Force**

1. Reviewed, recommended and implemented by Town Council that the Task Force become a standing Committee. Town staff and the chair of the current Task Force is working on an enabling ordinance to facilitate the creation of this standing committee. This task will be complete prior to the expiration of the current Task Force in December of 2009. This committee will meet as needed to ensure the accomplishment of the following:
  - a. Organizational meeting for the yearly election of officers.
  - b. Conduct a yearly review of the Cruise Season to identify operational issues and make recommendations if needed.
  - c. Conduct a yearly Cruise Season review of Passenger Service Fees, Port Development Fees, and the use and allocation of these funds.
  - d. Maintain and further industry relations and communication.
  - e. Provide a yearly Port Development report to the Town Council and Industry.